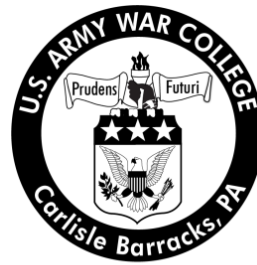


The United States Army War College: "Time for a Change"

by

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United States Army War College
Class of 2012

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**THE UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE
“TIME FOR A CHANGE”**

by

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ABSTRACT

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This paper analyzes the USAWC system and argues that the Ten Month Resident Program as the primary means of educating Senior Officer is in need of change. It presents innovative solutions that dramatically challenge and improve the current construct to better meet the needs of the officers and the nation.

THE UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE: “TIME FOR A CHANGE”

It is one of the enduring strengths of our Army that throughout our nation’s history we have developed leaders capable of meeting both current and future national security challenges. Yet, we must not take our past success in developing leaders for granted. Our leaders are performing superbly in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan today, but we must review and revise our leader development strategy to prepare the next generation of leaders for the complexities of the future operational environment waged across the spectrum of conflict. **This requires continual adaptation.**

—Army Leader and Development Strategy 2009¹

The United States Army War College (USAWC), as part of the Senior Service College (SSC) System, is a true enigma within a military structure that prides itself with providing clear, concise and concrete plans to solve even the most difficult of strategic problems. The student selection, requirements, standards, curriculum goals, desired end states, and post-graduation assignments’ process of the SSC system is filled with many contradictions, exceptions and gray areas making it what is often heard in the USAWC seminar rooms as “a true volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environment” or “wicked problem” worthy of considerable analysis.

This paper analyzes the current USAWC construct and challenges the basic assumption that the USAWC One-year Resident Program is the right approach to educate and develop our senior military and civilian leaders. It takes into account key factors that drive the process. They are:

- Personnel requirements of the services
- Current military officer culture after 10 years of sustained conflict
- Cost of education considering a looming military budget crisis
- The exponential growth of educational technology and distance education

- Senior leader espoused goals of the future Officer Education System (OES) in doctrine and published documents

This paper challenges the status quo with a motive that has the best interest of the Army and the officers and families who serve it. It questions the many commonly held beliefs and accepted norms within Army culture and challenges the strong bureaucratic system that supports that culture. It proposes two solutions to take into account the changing strategic environment.

What this paper does not do is argue against the idea that education is a life-long journey or that senior leaders should be educated to meet the nation's requirements. Nor does it question the fact that the USAWC is an iconic institution that has served its nation well and educated our greatest military leaders over the past 100 plus years. Instead it simply posits that the environment has changed and it is time for the USAWC to change if it is to maintain relevancy into the 21st century strategic environment.

Current Discussion

In recent years, there has been renewed interest and impassioned debate concerning the OES and specifically the Senior Service Colleges. Not since the Goldwater Nichols Act of 1986 and subsequent Skelton Panel has there been this much criticism about what is wrong with the system and suggestions on how it can be fixed. Like many complex issues, opinions vary on what the problem is and how it needs to be addressed.

The most widely read and controversial opinion that sparked the current public debate was that of former Washington Post writer and author Tom Ricks' blog posting in the Spring of 2011. Ricks' vitriolic attack went so far as to call for the closure of the war colleges and describing them as expensive and second-rate.² Ricks expressed his

views after reading a controversial piece by Daniel Hughes who served for 18 years at the Air War College. Hughes authored a chapter “Professors in the Colonels’ World” in a 2010 book entitled Military Culture and Education. There he attacked the Air War College’s academic rigor, faculty and students. He described students as “apathetic and uncaring, faculty of average intellect and administrators true amateurs.”³

Major General (Retired) and former USAWC Commandant Bob Scales in Proceedings magazine decried that the military is “too busy to learn” choosing operational assignments over educational ones. This and organizational malaise in the SSCs have made them an “intellectual backwater” he said. He called for a return to the day when uniformed officers rather than civilian instructors and contractors are assigned to the schoolhouse to teach -- not because their careers are over, but as a stepping stone for promotion. He went on to address the aging or “graying” of the SSCs student populations. He argued that because the average age has risen from 41 to 45, the SSCs are more of a preparation for retirement than a stepping stone for increased leadership at the strategic level.⁴

Dr. Joan Johnson-Freese, a professor at the Naval War College, said, “having taught at three Professional Military Education(PME) institutions over the past two decades, including chairing two departments, it is clear to me endemic issues persist.”⁵ She leveled criticism of the military students and called for a toughening up of academic standards. She said,

Though brave leaders in their operational jobs, when officers come to Professional Military Education (PME), they become like most graduate students-tetchy. Individuals who work 60+ hour weeks at the Pentagon, or even have come under fire in the field, suddenly find it unbearable to take two exams in a week or to write an eight-page paper...Students expect the War College to be a year off to relax and reconnect with family after

long operational assignments- and that is what they are told...It's time to get them over the fear of the red pen, and to make sure military education sits squarely where it belongs: a tough milestone just as important as every other an officer of the US armed forces must meet in his or her career.⁶

Dr. George Reed, a retired army colonel, former USAWC student and faculty member and current administrator at the University of San Diego wrote "What's Wrong and What's Right With the War Colleges." While overall very supportive of the War Colleges, he believes many of the issues with the SSCs are related to faculty and student quality. He acknowledged the cultural struggles between the civilian and military faculty. He calls some civilian faculty as second-tier academics; "the kind that teaches well but fails the tenure review because they lack a record of meaningful scholarship."⁷ In terms of the retired military officers who are hired to teach he says,

Retired officers are a mixed bag. They are often completely dedicated to the institution and bring a lifetime of experience, but without a deep underlying reservoir of disciplinary knowledge and strong desire to stay connected and contribute to it, they can get a bit stale...Their experiences have a shelf life that begins to expire on the date of retirement. They can usually run a good seminar, but few contribute much in terms scholarship as measured by the usual indicators of research and publication.⁸

Dr. Reed's critical observations were not limited to the faculty. He lamented on the students, system of selection and accountability saying:

A board comprised of officers from the field select attendees who have not necessarily expressed any interest at all in attending. No writing samples are required and there is no graduate record exam or other testing considered for admissions. Some (students) attend merely because they see it as an opportunity to reconnect with their families or get in shape. As a faculty member we use to quip about students attending the war colleges who were obviously there under an "athletic scholarship." Yes, there are a number of students attending the war colleges who should not be there, and who really do not want to be there. They want the block checked for their next assignment and promotion. They can skate through, meeting minimal requirements....There is very little in place to prevent such freeloading.⁹

Colonel (Retired) Charles Allen, a current USAWC faculty member authored *Redress of Professional Military Education: The Clarion Call for Joint Forces Quarterly*. There he argued that the problem is not the SSCs but rather a promotion system that values operational assignments over that of education. That system has communicated to the officer corps that it is more important to be selected for SSC than it is to attend. This has created a PME system that is “out of balance” that must be corrected. He uses historical references to World War II and post Vietnam as a warning that if not corrected we could return to the time when the officer corps was not prepared to meet the strategic challenges it faced. He says “the existing culture toward PME is a direct result of the policies emplaced to support force generation requirements... the culture is reinforced by organizational design and structure; and formal statements of organizational philosophy.”¹⁰ He recommends specific actions to change this culture to re-establish balance within the system. He says,

Specific application of targeted leaders’ actions is needed to convey to the officer corps that education is a necessary and valued component of leader development...Key actions are what leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis...Army leaders should track attendance at PME and focus attention to ensure that leaders are receiving relevant education for their professional development. PME venues need to receive resources- scheduled time in an officer’s career, adequate funding and facilities, and most important, quality faculty to provide the best educational experience to students. Finally, the reward of promotion and key billet assignment based on completion of required PME, may be the strongest lever to change the culture.¹¹

Dr. Richard Kohn a professor emeritus of History and Peace, War and Defense at the University of North Carolina ask the question in his article “Chicken Little’s: It’s time to trim defense spending and here is how,” Do we need six war colleges for a military that is half the size of its Cold War Model when we had five then?¹²

Defense analysts outside of the system or faculty not in uniform levied all of the aforementioned analysis and criticism. However, the analysis is not limited to only those. In May of 2010, the USAWC produced a report at the request of the United States Army Training and Doctrine (TRADOC) Commander. This report's purpose was to examine how the system could bring balance to the Army in terms of training, experience and education, which are the three pillars of the Army Leader Development Strategy. It was specifically directed "to conduct an end-to-end study of Senior Level College (SLC) attendance by active duty Army officers among the various Senior Level Colleges and Fellowships."¹³ The report discusses solely how to justify the current system (resident program) and make it relevant again. It did not examine the current system to determine if it was still valid or ways to improve the overall education system. It had three key findings and several recommendations. Its three findings were.¹⁴

- There is a lack of documented Military Education Level (MEL) 1 requirements.
The SSC process is not driven by needs of the force
- Increased SLC deferments is an accepted part of the Army culture
- SLC student populations are older and attend later in their careers reducing effective utilization

As a result of these findings, the report made specific recommendations it felt would have significant impact and bring balance back to the "Resident Program" They were:¹⁵

- Require MEL 1 for Colonel Centralized Selection List positions
- Re-establish MEL1 coded positions and develop a distribution of assignments system

- Link SLC selection numbers to requirements for MEL1 coded positions
- Reduce the SLC Zone of Consideration to four years
- Establish SLC selection target percentages by year group for each board
- Limit the number of deferrals to one and requirement approval by the Commanding General of Human Resources Command
- Raise the approval level for second deferral request to the four-star general level. Either the TRADOC Commander or Vice Chief of Staff of the Army
- Require enrollment in Distance Education or declination with prejudice for failing to attend the SLC following one approved deferral
- Establish branch requirements for all venues to ensure experiential mix
- Activate alternates to attend SLC by branch first, then functional category
- Change “SSC” Selectee” and “Declined SSC” on Officer Record Brief entries

Of note, since its publication, the Army has adopted two of the report’s recommendations. It is now a requirement that all colonels selected for brigade level command must have achieved MEL1, and that the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army must approve deferrals.

In April 2010 the U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee published the final report that is relevant to this paper. It is entitled, “Another Crossroads? Professional Military Education Two Decades After the Goldwater Nichols Act and Skelton Reports.” This report analyzed where the Department of Defense (DoD) stood in terms of implementation of the legislation and recommendations within the 1986 Goldwater Nichols Act and subsequent Skelton report. Unlike all the previous analyses, this report’s findings view the issue of PME from a much more strategic

perspective without delving into specifics about the SSCs themselves. However, for the purposes of this paper, it is useful to note key sentences that are underlined below.

Each of these supports and indirectly recommends a broader/strategic look at the need for change within the SSC system in support of OES. The report had 11 major findings four of which are relevant to this paper. They are:

Today's PME system is basically sound; there are areas however, that are areas that need improvement. The system operates within a dynamic and national security environment. Consequently, it must be more prepared to anticipate and adapt to current and future challenges.

Competing demands make it difficult to accommodate the need for the requisite PME, training and experience. Officers are finding it increasingly challenging to complete their required PME, which is only compounded by current operational requirements. This strain has contributed to the services seeking flexibility in managing PME and assignments.

With limited exceptions, nothing in law precludes officers from being assigned to joint billets without having received Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) credit. As a result, many officers are assigned to joint billets without having completed appropriate joint education. This disconnect between JPME and joint duty assignments has become a common practice, disregarding a fundamental purpose of JPME, which by law and policy, is preparation for those assignments.

Some operational commanders, including the Combatant Commanders, reportedly consider their staff officers lacking in certain critical abilities necessary to perform their jobs effectively. Significant numbers of officers are serving in staff positions without having the appropriate level of PME prior to assignment. Furthermore, many officers reportedly consider the PME they receive to be inadequate preparation for these assignments.¹⁶

Each of these findings is significant considering the armed forces has been working at PME and SSC for over 110 years and has had over 20 years since the Skeleton Report to meet the needs of the system and the individual officers.

At this point, it would be easy to jump straight to the proposed recommendations this papers supports. However, doing so would be shortsighted and not give due

respect to the importance history has played on not only the USAWC, but also the SSC system.

History

When looking at the USAWC you must ask yourself, how did this simple idea that we need to properly educate our officers on the matters of war and strategy become something that is now so bitterly debated? To better understand how the USAWC within SSC system has matured to this point it is appropriate to first review its history.

Since the founding of the United States, the issue of officer education has faced the government. Because of the importance of protecting the United States and its interests, as articulated in our founding documents, the federal government has shown an interest in ensuring its military leaders were properly educated to meet the needs of their nation. It is not surprising then that the creation of the USAWC was a result of an identified weakness of the military system designed to protect the nation following the failures of the Spanish American War. Since its creation, the USAWC has transformed, reflecting the growth of the nation as a leader in the strategic and international environment. As the nation changed so did the USAWC. With this change came internal debate and strife every few years very similar to what we see now. Colonel Harry P. Ball, author and USAWC historian, proposed in his book, *Of Responsible Command*, that until 1980 the USAWC had undergone 18 specific eras.¹⁷ Since that time, it can be argued, the USAWC has undergone four more. Each of these eras has had a significant role in shaping the current structure and curriculum. For the purposes of this paper we review only the key eras as judged by the author that have played the greatest role in shaping the current system.

The Army General Staff 1905-1916

The USAWC was founded on 27 November 1901 at the direction of Secretary of War Elihu Root. The abysmal performance of the Army during the Spanish American War to raise, equip, transport and supply the Army in Cuba made it clear that there was a need for senior officer education in the ways of modern warfare. At its inception, the USAWC was used primarily for the growth and development of the Army General Staff. Education took a back seat to the more pressing needs of the Army at the time. The first USAWC educational model was described by General Tasker H. Bliss as “learning by doing”, as students/staff officers work on the current challenges within the Army.¹⁸ At its founding, there was strife about the role and function of the school. Elihu Root addressed the first class saying, “be careful not to let your attention be focused too strongly on the administration of the Army. The General Staff was created with the primary object of studying military science. You are brought together to do the thinking for the Army, not merely the administration.”¹⁹ By 1916, the USAWC had gradually grown into an academic institution partially divorcing itself from its role as solely a staff agency. The end of this era was significant for the USAWC. Its position as an independent academic institution divorced from the Army Staff prevails today to the betterment of the college.

Call for Jointness 1945-1951

From 1940 to 1945 the USAWC closed its doors as the demand for officers for World War II trumped education requirements. The Army grew from a meager force of approximately 230,000 officers and men in 1940 to more than eight million in 1945. The officer corps grew as well from 14,000 to half a million. By 1945 less than one percent of officers were USAWC graduates. However, of over 1,000 General Officers, 600

hundred were graduates of the USAWC.²⁰ While these officers performed remarkably leading larger forces than ever imagined while studying at the USAWC, it soon became apparent that many lacked a true understanding of the predominant concept of joint operations. As a result, Joint Chiefs of Staffs in 1943 established the Army-Navy Staff College to meet the need of the armed forces. The Army-Navy Staff College was closed by the end of the war, and new discussions began about the future of joint officer and education. What was clear in those discussions was twofold. First, there was no question that senior officer education was vital; second that both the Army and Navy War College curricula prior to the war lacked a “joint approach” that incorporated land, air, sea components as well as the political and economic aspects of war. Throughout 1944 and 1945 each of the services conducted internal studies to determine the future of officer education. The Army’s study included proposals to re-open the USAWC with a pre-war mission construct as well as one that would be similar to the Army-Navy Staff College. The Army Air Forces study resulted in the creation of the Air University in 1946.

During this same period, the Joint Chiefs recommended the permanent establishment of Army-Navy Staff College. The proposal included a curriculum that included the study of social, political and economic affairs as well as the study of total war and joint action.²¹ Another recommendation was that the Army Industrial College become a joint college. Not surprisingly, all three of the services supported the proposal. The Joint Chiefs proposal had a direct impact on a major Army study led by Lieutenant General Leonard Gerow that was looking at a comprehensive study of Army education. The results of the study were a proposal for a coordinated educational system for all the services. The board envisioned a system above and beyond the

Army-Navy College recommended by the Joint Chiefs. The system called for an Armed Forces Colleges led by the Army “to develop commanders and staffs officers qualified to plan and direct operations of Army Forces (includes Army Air Corps) and to coordinate these operations with naval forces. If the Navy would support the proposal it was recommended the school be run by the Joint Chiefs.”²² The final piece of the proposal was the establishment of the National Security University that was to be used to educate the most senior officers of all the armed forces. It was to have four separate colleges: War, State Department, Administrative and Intelligence. Military personnel would attend the National War College. Its stated purpose would be to “develop officers capable of high command and staff duties in connection with prevention of war, preparation for and prosecution war on a global scale, and the execution of responsibilities of Armed Forces subsequent to hostilities.”²³ Because of this proposal, it was recommended that the USAWC should not be re-opened and the facilities turned over to the National Security University. Before the report could be fully submitted, the Joint Chiefs moved forward on two of the recommendations. In the spring 1946, the National War College was opened and Army Industrial College re-designated the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. The moving trend of “jointness” was completely embraced by the Army to the point where it had completely subjugated its educational system to it. By end of 1947, the Army found itself without either a USAWC or an Industrial College. This would not have been an issue if the other services had embraced the joint concept and worked to develop the system to produce the required number of officers to meet the identified demand. Instead, with the establishment of the Air Force as a separate service with its own college and the Navy’s insistence that it

keep its War College left the Army as the odd man out. Although still supportive of the joint system, the Army soon acknowledged like its sister services, it would need its own USAWC. After a series of additional committees, studies and boards, the final decision was made to re-open the USAWC. The prime argument for the re-opening was that the National War College and Industrial College of the Armed Forces could not produce enough Army officers trained in strategic matters to meet the operational requirements of the force.²⁴

After the decision was made to re-open the USAWC, controversy and debate began over who should be the proponent. Like before, many felt the college should fall directly under the War Department/Department of Defense while others wanted the academic freedom that would come with the Army as its proponent. Additionally, those who fought for more centralized control lost to those giving the college more independence to be run by a commandant under Army control. The second debate was where to locate the school. Because the Army had given its old facilities to the National War College, the USAWC was without a home. Many felt the only place for the USAWC was Fort Leavenworth. Moving it there would create an “Army University” with two components: the Command and General Staff College and USAWC. Proponents also argued it was far more cost effective than trying to support two separate and distinct institutions. Other pushed for a different location to give the USAWC true autonomy. On 30 November 1949, General Wade Haslip the Vice Chief of Staff made the decision that the USAWC would temporarily be re-opened in Fort Leavenworth until a permanent location could be found. A board was again convened to look for a permanent location. General Order 4 published February 1, 1950 designated the USAWC to be taught

temporarily at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Sixteen months later General Order 41 was published directing the move of the USAWC to its permanent home at Carlisle Barracks on July, 5 1951.

The end of this era was significant for the USAWC and would have lasting effects that are prevalent in today's system. First, the basic SSC construct was established with each service retaining their own college and having designated joint-colleges. Our senior officers are educated and developed within a system that has not changed significantly since 1951 in terms of the operational construct. Second, the financial burden of maintaining multiple installations for officer's education that was argued against in 1949 remains a modern day reality.

The Modern USAWC is Born - 1952-1957

The USAWC opened its doors at Carlisle Barracks in September 1952. The first class was not only Army officers but also officers from the Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force. Since the last class of 1940, much had changed in the world. The class of 1952 was faced with a much more complex and demanding strategic environment. The rise of the Soviet Union, the general acceptance of the Cold War as the reality of international existence, an armed conflict in Korea, atomic weapons, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance, and rising perceived threat of global communism were daunting challenges facing the military. While it seems obvious now that the USAWC curriculum should have been broad enough to address these challenges, at the time it was not the case.

There were two schools of thought. The first believed that Army officers must remain within strict professional boundaries and not dwell on matters that were not primarily Army affairs. The second believed exactly the opposite. They were of the

opinion that senior commanders and staff officers supporting them should be men who understood and appreciated the broader political, economic and social contexts in which the armed forces are employed.²⁵

During those years USAWC conducted numerous internal reviews initiated by the USAWC Commandant and the Army. This recursive approach at evaluating procedures and systems within the college led to many initiatives that, while not adopted at the time, eventually led to changes within the USAWC that we recognize today as cornerstones to the institution. These included the broad strategic view of education requirements, the introduction of civilian instructors, the establishment of an official USAWC publication, civilians added to the student body and the re-introduction of the correspondence program or what we call today the Distance Education Program.

Goldwater Nichols Skelton Panel Era 1986-Current

It can be easily argued that not since its founding has there been any initiative or event that has had a greater impact on the SSC system and USAWC than the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act (GNA) of 1986, and the subsequent Skelton Panel. The GNA was a result of identified weaknesses and poor performance by the Department of Defense. The act dramatically reformed the Department of Defense in terms of joint interoperability, and a subset of that was how to develop officers who understood strategy and joint operations. What it did not do was specify requirements on how to achieve the broad guidance of becoming more “Joint.” In 1987, as result of the shortcomings in Goldwater Nichols in terms of specific guidance on Professional Military Education (PME), the House Armed Services Committee established a panel on PME led by Representative Ike Skelton. The panel

assessed the PME system's ability to develop officers in both strategy and joint matters, as well as the Department of Defense plans to implement the joint PME requirements created by Goldwater-Nichols.²⁶ The Skelton report, while not a law, detailed what JPME should be, and based on the fluid arguments was generally accepted by the services with approximately 90% of the recommendations adopted. As part of this initiative, it was recognized that in addition to individual service expertise achieved through PME, the Department of Defense had a need for officers with equal expertise in joint matters. It was envisioned that this group of officers (Joint Specialty Officers or JSOs) would be developed through a specific Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) and joint assignments.²⁷ This would be done through the three traditional joint institutions, and was not envisioned to be done at the service specific schools. Over the past 20+ years, the Department of Defense and the individual service schools to include the USAWC has gone above and beyond the guidance and mandates of the Goldwater Nichols Act and Skelton Panel in many respects and in some respects has completely disregarded their guidance.

One area that has exceeded the mandates from the panel is JPME. Currently, there is no difference in PME and JPME at the senior level for resident courses. For example, in the Army the only courses that are not considered JPME are pre-commissioning, and the Captains Career Courses. Once an officer achieves the rank of Major, the remainder of his or her education is considered JPME. This fact was reflected in the April 2010, House Armed Services Committee report that stated, "Today, traditional PME curricula would be considered incomplete without the inclusion of joint curricula. Consequently, this report uses the term PME to include JPME, unless

otherwise specifically noted.”²⁸ It went on to say that: “With regard to JPME specifically the Department’s implementation of recent legislative changes has weakened the connection between JPME and joint duty assignments. Yet, JPME completion is only needed to be eligible for appointment for general or flag officer. The combination of these changes suggests that JPME completion may be more relevant to ensuring an officer’s competitiveness for selection to flag rank than it is to enhancing job performance in the joint arena.”²⁹

From this historical review, it is clear to see that much thought and effort has gone into the development of growth of both OES and the SSC system since in inception in 1906. The system has undergone many changes that have been reflective of the strategic environment. Each change to the system has been filled with the same type of debate and controversy we see today. As in the past, the Army and DoD are now faced with a cross-road along the path of the officer education and development system. The path it selects will shape and USAWC and its students of the future.

Current USAWC Structure

The Senior Service College system consists of selection, slating and education/instruction and utilization assignment following graduation.

Selection. Each year Senior Service College Boards select (on average) 350 Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels as principals for the Senior Service Colleges. This represents approximately the top 20% of a year group selected within each branch.³⁰ They select approximately 1000 officers as alternates who can be activated during the year prior to start of the class each summer. This process effectively means that 80% of the senior eligible Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels are not afforded the opportunity to

attend the USAWC. Those 80% not selected they have two options, apply for the USAWC Distance Education Program or not. Either course of action will not have an impact on their promotion or future opportunity to serve. Officers that are selected have a few options. They can defer, apply for constructive credit, compete to attend one of the four service schools, international schools or fellowships, or enroll in the Distance Education Program. The only exception to this is that officers selected for Brigade/O6 level command must attend one of the in resident programs.

Slating. Once the selection process is complete, Headquarters, Department of the Army G3/5/7, Institutional Training Division and the G1 develops slates officers to the various schools based on the following priorities: 1) Schools of other nations, 2) Fellowships, 3) National Defense University, 4) Sister Service Colleges, and 5) USAWC.³¹ Officers can submit preference sheets requesting options other than attending the USAWC. Those requests are considered along with the officer's qualifications. However the Army's needs to achieve branch and experience diversity within the different programs are the primary factors considered. In 2012, 44% of the student cohort requested the Resident USAWC Program as their first choice followed by 31% requesting the Fellowship Program.³² In 2010, 52% requested Fellowships as their first choice.³³

Education Options. The USAWC consists and has oversight of four primary programs that are the pillars of the educational program. They are the 10-month Resident Program, the Two-year Non-Resident or Distance Education Program, International College Fellowships and the Fellowship Program. The purpose of the USAWC, according to their website, is:

The U.S Army War College develops, inspires and serves strategic leaders for the wise and effective application of national power, in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational environment, emphasizing development and employment of land power. The US Army War College educates select military, civilian, and international leaders; supports worldwide practitioners; conducts research and publishes to inform thought; supports the Army's strategic communication efforts; provides comprehensive well-being education and support.³⁴

While all of this is undoubtedly true, the fact is that the primary purpose, while not stated, is to produce officers who achieve Military Education Level 1 education and also achieve Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) I for the non-resident course and JPME II certification for the resident course. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP) drives the two certifications.

According to the OPMEP the mission of the USAWC is:

Although each Service SLC mission is unique, a fundamental objective of each is to prepare future military and civilian leaders for high-level policy and command and staff responsibilities requiring joint and Service operational expertise and war-fighting skills by educating them in diplomatic, informational, military and economic dimensions of the strategic security environment and the effect of those dimensions on strategy formulation, implementation, and campaigning. SLC subject matter is inherently joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational and completes **educational requirements** for Joint Qualified Officer nomination.³⁵

While not written in policy, there are quite a few other benefits of attending the USAWC Resident Program that senior leaders use to articulate the importance of the institution. These are:

- 1) Develop long lasting relationships with American and International officers and officials
- 2) Earn a Masters Degree in Strategic Studies
- 3) Re-connect with your family
- 4) Get healthy through long needed surgeries and physical fitness

5) Reflect on your profession

All of these benefits it can be argued are important for the growth and development of the senior officer corps but are not stated requirements.

The only stated quantitative requirement to attend the USAWC is to achieve the JPME II certification. However, this is somewhat misleading. There are no assignments that are driven by JPME or MEL 1 requirements. Therefore the only true requirement for JPMEII certification is to be promoted to General or Flag Officer.

The fact is that the preponderance of SLC graduates will never achieve the rank of Brigadier General and beyond. The current selection rate to Brigadier General is less than eight percent.³⁶ This means we have a system that expends a huge amount of resources and effort for no required reason except to produce a select few officers who will be selected for General. Of course, all officers benefit from the education, but, the only documented Army requirement is to be promoted to General. This argument is further strengthened when you consider that officers selected for fellowships, which are the top priority for Human Resources Command, do not achieve JPME II certification. Each year this is evident with the number of officers who participated in fellowships and had to attend the ten-week Joint and Combined Warfighting School (JCWS or JAWS) to achieve the requirement of JPME II before the list for promotion to Brigadier General can be published.

Current Education Options

USAWC Resident Program. Each year, on average 350 American and international officers and government civilians attend the ten-month resident program in Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. The Resident Education Program consists of six core courses, the Strategic Decision Making Exercise, five elective courses, and the National

Security Seminar. Each student also must complete a Strategy Research Project.³⁷

Students also travel to New York City and Washington D.C. for a few days to visit and interact with government and non-government organizations. The Resident Program is a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) assignment that requires students and their families to move to Carlisle Barracks. Students may select not to bring their families and attend as geographical bachelors or bachelorettes for the duration of the course and upon graduation move again to their follow-on assignment.

Fellowship Program. Fellowships are academic opportunities that are offered at numerous elite academic, government and non-government institutions throughout the United States and foreign countries. These fellowships are normally a year and many offer Master Degree in various fields. Upon completion, fellows are awarded the USAWC fellowship certificate of completion in place of a resident diploma. Students however, do not meet the JPME requirements and therefore are not eligible for promotion without further joint military education. "Academic fellowships provide a strategically-oriented experience equivalent in quality to the standard senior service college course. Regional fellowships, likewise, provide a strategic orientation, but have a decidedly regional focus. Specialized fellowships, also equivalent to the standard course, tend to focus on narrower functional areas. The specialized fellowship will expose the fellow to the highest level of command, staff, and operational elements within the area of concentration, and allow the fellow to interact with the highest level of leadership in that specialized area."³⁸ Currently, FY 2012 has 89 officers attending fellowships with that number expected to grow in the coming years.³⁹

Senior Service Schools. Each of the other services operates their own War College. Each of these colleges has students from the other branches within its student body. This is done to ensure the school meets the OPMEP requirements to be certified as a joint institution. The curriculum, while somewhat different from the USAWC, is delivered using the seminar based learning model that embraces student interaction to meet identified terminal learning objectives established in the lesson plans. The model is executed over of a ten-month period at each institution. The other Senior Service Schools are very similar to the USAWC with some differences in curriculum and academic requirements. Like the USAWC assignment to these institutions is a PCS for officers and their families.

Joint Service Schools. Like the USAWC and the other Service Schools, the National Defense University (NDU) that falls under the Chairman of the Joint Staff offers two year long programs that achieve JPME II certification for the students who attend. NDU has the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF) and the National War College (NWC). The officers who attend these institutions are selected and slated through the same process as students at the USAWC. The Masters Degree that is awarded is identical to that of the USAWC with accreditation coming from the same organization. The curriculum and educational standards are somewhat different but the seminar based learning model is identical. One major difference between the institutions is that 51% of the graduates from NDU are required to be assigned to the Joint Staff.

One additional program run by NDU is the Joint and Combined Warfighting School (JCWS). The JCWS awards JPME II certification that is identical to that of USAWC. The major difference is the JCWS accomplishes in a ten-week curriculum

what it takes the other institutions and USAWC ten months to do. They focus on four learning that are requirements to meet JPME III accreditation. They are Nation Security Strategy; Joint Intergovernmental and Multinational Capabilities; Theater Strategy and Campaigning and; the Joint Planning and Process Systems.⁴⁰ This school is offered eight times a year for specially selected officers. As mentioned earlier in this paper JCWS is used frequently to educate officers who have been selected for flag officer rank but have not met the JPME II requirement.

USAWC Distance Education Program. The Distance Education Program (DEP) at the USAWC allows students to participate in a two-year, rigorous program of instruction that results in the award of the same Graduation Certificate and the same fully-accredited Master of Strategic Studies degree awarded to graduates of our resident program. The DEP is also accredited by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, as a program for joint education, Phase I Senior Level (JPME I). The Distance Education Program allows one to work a regular full-time job and still make time for a USAWC degree. One will need to devote 15 hours each week to a program that is delivered via the Internet and leverages technology to enhance the educational experience.⁴¹

Constructive Credit. Officers who are selected for SLC (Senior Leader College) may also apply for constructive credit in lieu of attendance. To receive credit an officer must be judged to possess the same skill set and or qualifications as SLC graduates. Headquarters Department of the Army, G3/5/7 has authority to grant constructive credit. Human Resources Command and the USAWC review all requests for constructive credit.⁴²

Utilization and Assignment. The term “education requirements” used in the OPMEP is interesting. According the Army’s Senior Leader Division who assigns senior officers upon graduation from the USAWC, there are no assignments that require MEL I, JPME I or II.⁴³ While there are “joint critical” assignments, there are no positions to which officers without JPME I or II can’t be assigned. The only exception to this rule is that officers selected for O-6 level commands must complete a Senior Service College or its equivalent prior to taking command. This is a recent requirement instituted by Army Chief of Staff, General George Casey, in the spring of 2011.⁴⁴

Promotion/Potential. In 1968, author and Colonel George Pappas wrote what is still heard in the halls of the USAWC today:

The USAWC does not train an officer only for the assignment he goes to immediately after graduation; if this was the sole benefit of that officer’s education at the War College, the institution would have failed to completely achieve its assigned mission. The professional military men who study at the Army War College are educated to take their places as the national leaders of the Armed Forces five, ten years hence.⁴⁵

The question is, is that true? Let us face reality for a moment. The only officers attending the Senior Service Colleges who have the opportunity to achieve the rank of General or Flag officer are those selected to command at the next level. The majority of USAWC Graduates are not selected for command -- that means that most have been promoted for the last time. This is especially true for the FY 2012 class. In the past, selection for the USAWC was almost a guarantee that officers would be promoted to Colonel/O6. This year, 22% of the eligible USAWC Lieutenant Colonels were not selected for promotion.⁴⁶ This number is shocking and begs the question why were then selected and sent to the USAWC, when they have no potential for positions of increased responsibility.

Another thing to consider based on the analysis of USAWC demographics of the last ten years is that officers are attending later in their careers. This means the average graduate has less time to serve before mandatory retirement dates or meeting the key gate of 26 years when Colonels can retire in grade. This significantly reduces the time the Army has to get a return on the educational investment.⁴⁷

For those few who are selected to command, their chances for promotion, and therefore opportunities to serve in the highest of strategic positions, are not tied to their intellectual growth from the USAWC or their grasp of the strategic environment, but rather their performance in command. Officers are judged simply by how well they perform as leaders of their organizations or in a practical matter what their next two to three Officer Evaluation Reports upon graduation say about their potential.

As of December of 2011, 45% of General Officers attended the USAWC Resident Course. By rank, the numbers are 45 % of Brigadier Generals, 51% of Major Generals, 32% of Lieutenant Generals and just 30% of Four-Star Generals. This shows that officers who attend a program other than the USAWC have a greater chance of promotion than those who attend the Resident Program at Carlisle Barracks.⁴⁸

Cost. The Department of Defense maintains four Masters Degree awarding Senior Service War Colleges. The cost of education varies significantly among the different institutions. For example the Navy War College is \$57,000 per student⁴⁹ while the USAWC is \$166,000 per student.⁵⁰ The cost of attending the USAWC has grown at a real annual rate of 5.1% since FY2001 while the overall Army Training and Recruiting budget has only grown one percent in annually in real terms.⁵¹ This price did not include the Permanent Change of Station cost bringing students to the school. Based on

anecdotal evidence the cost of moving a student to Carlisle Barracks for 10-months is approximately \$15,000- \$25,000 per student. Combining all this together the cost to educate each military student at the USAWC is \$181,000 to \$201,000. One additional cost that must also be considered is what it cost to run Carlisle Barracks. In FY 2010 and 2011 the Carlisle Barracks operations and maintenance budget for FY 2010 and 2011 was \$22.5 million.

To understand how this overall cost compares to the civilian sector it is important to look at the equivalent cost of elite Colleges Master Degree Programs offered throughout the country.

- The one-year Harvard Kennedy School Edward S. Mason Master in Public Administration is \$55,826⁵²
- The University of Washington, that currently ranks as the number one state university offers a one-year Executive Master in Public Administration's program for only \$40,750⁵³
- The two-year Executive Master of Business Administration offered by the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business is \$124,900 or \$62,450 annually⁵⁴
- The one-year International Public Policy and Management Program from the University of Southern California is \$65,200⁵⁵
- Duke University offers a one-year Master of International Development Policy for \$42, 550⁵⁶

Based on this simple evaluation it is clear from a purely financial perspective that the USAWC is much more expensive than any civilian institution. It can also be argued

that the value of a Master Degree from any of these prestigious institutions is much greater than the Master of the Strategic Art degree awarded by the USAWC through the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. As one senior administrator at the USAWC said, “your Master Degree from here isn’t worth the paper it is printed on.”⁵⁷

Shifting Army Officer Culture

Since Sept 11, 2001, the United States military has been in constant and sustained combat operations. This requirement has placed an exorbitant amount of stress and strain on soldiers, officers and their families. Most officers today have one deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan with the majority having multiple deployments. This dynamic has changed the perspective and priorities of the officer corps. Officers understand the importance of providing stability for their families who suffered from the strain of multiple deployments and the associated stress of wondering if their service member was coming home. While there is not supporting quantitative data to support this claim, one must accept that the Army, its Officers and families are not the same force that existed prior to September 11, 2001. One clear piece of evidence this is the rise of geo-graphical bachelors at the USAWC.

From the very first USAWC Class, select officers chose to attend as so-called geo-graphical bachelors or bachelorettes. These officers attended the course without their families. While traditionally a relatively small number of students from each class have chosen this option in recent years, the number has increased. In the current class of 2011-2012, a record 80 students are attending the course as geo-graphical bachelors. That number is more than double the highest previous class. When this statistic was briefed to Army Chief of Staff General Ray Odierno, he was shocked,

according to an USAWC official and directed a survey to determine why so many of the officers were choosing this option. This year's high number of Geographical Bachelors could be a statistical anomaly, but this paper posits that this is a reflection of a changing culture within the senior military leadership. As mentioned earlier, after ten-years of sustained conflict, many officers and their families have dealt with multiple one-year deployments that have disrupted and placed additional stress on families. As a result, officers are not willing to add the stress that two moves within one year imparts on families. Below are four quotes from officers in the 2012 USAWC Resident Course reflecting this thesis.

All based on family considerations. The decision was complicated based on recent separations due to deployment. In the end, we made a family choice because we believed it was in the best interests of the family. The primary reason was to avoid three high schools for my daughter.⁵⁸

I find it shocking the number of officers who are essentially forced to be geo-bachelors, either because of the housing market, frequent PCS/deployments, or follow-on assignments. Families are worn out, stressed, and not willing to put up with "Army life" as it used to be.⁵⁹

I was diverted to attend USAWC. In hindsight, I would not have come to Carlisle knowing it would cost me my BAH in Virginia and put my family in an awkward position. I submitted multiple waivers according to the ALARACT for Professional Military Education only to have them denied. Even after legal review by SJAs in Carlisle, APG, and the Pentagon on the wording of the ALARACT, they were still denied. This cost me \$900/month for the BAH and \$300/month for rent. I would never let a Soldier be treated like this.⁶⁰

The reality is that today's officer corps including myself and their families don't look at a one year PCS even to get the "Carlisle Experience" very enticing. We have working spouses, kids in schools, and homes that we own versus living in government housing projects. The idea of PCSing twice in the course of one year isn't that exciting. After multiple deployments, we want stability for our families even at the cost of another year apart. Consider this as well, the assignment process has a hard time even figuring out where people will be assigned until four months before graduation. That only adds more stress to families who have lived with continual stress over the past 10 years.⁶¹

While these quotes do not represent the majority of students who still bring their families to the USAWC; it is an indication that with nearly 27% of the 2012 class being Geo-graphical bachelors, that the culture is shifting especially with officers with high school age children or working spouses.

The AY12 Geographic Bachelor (GB) Survey revealed the reasons officers chose to be separated from their families for ten months to attend the USAWC. In order, the primary reason for GB status in AY12 was children in school (40%), the secondary reason was spouses in civilian employment (30%), and the third reason was housing and living arrangements (23%). Thirty-four percent of Geographic Bachelors attended a site that was more than 1,000 miles from their home. The majority of geographic bachelors, 95%, established another residence to eliminate the need for a daily commute. Those two who did not establish another residence commuted 50 to 100 miles daily one way to their home of residence.⁶²

The decision by officers to separate from their families is undoubtedly a difficult decision. Along with family separation, officers endure the substantial financial burden of maintaining two residences and the travel cost to return home. Considering all of this it is clear their concern to provide stability for their families' overrides personal and financial concerns associated being a geo-graphical bachelor. General Odierno's reported surprise by the number of geo-graphical bachelors could indicate a growing divide between the senior army leadership and the current generation of officers. It could also be the emergence of a shifting culture and belief system within the officer corps that places a greater importance on family stability then conforming to Army tradition and established precedence.

Doctrine/Future

The Army from has always worked to anticipate the future in terms of technology, innovation and potential threats. When analyzing the USAWC and considering the future of the institution it is important to understand what the Army is currently saying about the future of Officer Education and the overall concept of Leader Development. The two documents that provide clarity as to what the senior Army leadership is thinking are the U.S. Army Learning Concept for 2015 and U.S. Army Training Concept published in January 2011. The following quotations with underlined areas considering changes to the current training and education construct.

Based on changing educational trends, the education model Army leaders will experience in 2020 will be one that is predominately distributed and relies significantly on technology to link geographically dispersed learners with distributed educators and resources. The interactions between teachers and students will be more frequent but less structured. As a result, education will be more accessible to a greater population and more tailored to individual needs. Education institutions will become more integrated, accessible, and more dependent on outside organizations to remain current, relevant, and responsive to student demand.⁶³

The Army requires a flexible school system that allows cross component participation in whichever educational solution best meets the needs of the individual to make them available to return to units.⁶⁴

The Army requires the capability for a virtual university, with an integrated interface providing seamless access to training and education resources with the ability to create an adaptable and flexible framework focused on the learner. The capability is required to encompass a personalized dashboard that visually depicts the status of an individual's training, education, and professional goals. It is required to serve as a platform for the creation of virtual education centers, virtual classrooms, virtual staff rides, and virtual mentors and coaches.⁶⁵

In addition to the published Army documents the USAWC itself projects substantial changes in the future.

In 2015, the online instructional delivery system will offer a dynamic, media-rich learning experience to learners across platforms, operating systems, and device sizes.⁶⁶

Recommendations

If the USAWC is to keep with its motto “Prudens Futuri” or “Provident for the Future”, it will need to undergo some structure changes within the system to ensure it remains relevant as we move forward into the 21st Century. It is clear based on doctrine that the Army recognizes that change is required and sees a future different than the current construct. As with all pronouncements about what the future will look like the “devil is in the details.” It is always easy to make broad pronouncement but implementing them is always more difficult.

The first question one might ask is if re-structuring the USAWC and the Senior Service College system is even feasible. I believe the answer is “yes”- but it would be difficult to bring about. In the first place, it would require bold and creative leadership willing to take on the embedded bureaucracy and Army culture that is reluctant to change, especially when dealing with a storied institution like the USAWC. The strong alumni association, Pennsylvania political leadership and embedded traditionalists would undoubtedly oppose any changes to the USAWC construct. Any alternative that could take away jobs, threaten the need for Carlisle Barracks, challenge tradition or erode the current standing structure would be resisted. Government entities like the USAWC grow but rarely do they shrink. Once a bureaucracy is established the internal and external forces that advocated for it will fight violently to protect it. I believe this would be true with the USAWC.

This dynamic was articulated by British General and author Rupert Smith. He said, “Military Thinkers practice within a set of received beliefs that are rigidly upheld to

the extent of suppressing novelties that are subversive to them. A shift occurs when an anomaly finally does subvert the existing of practice. This is a revolution, what Thomas Kuhn calls a paradigm shift that necessitates both new assumptions and reconstruction of prior assumptions, which is the main reason it is strongly resisted.”⁶⁷ The key assumption of the USAWC that I believe must be deconstructed is that the primary avenue to achieve the desired outcome of senior military education is the year-long resident attendance course at Carlisle Barracks. As indicated in this paper, many of the procedures and options within the current system have already begun to erode that assumption. The growth of fellowships, distance education and stated goals of future Army education are evidence that the system I believe is primed for change. Add to the equation the harsh reality of the exorbitant cost of the Resident Program, looming budget cuts and the growing culture of resistance to attendance by senior officers and I feel the time for change is here.

The following two proposals I believe would meet all Army and DoD requirements and provide officers with the education necessary for future service. Importantly, the options can be done at a fraction of the cost of the current Resident Program and give more flexibility to officers and their families.

The two proposals I will present have one common element: Officers selected for Brigade level command would be enrolled in a fellowship. More details of this option will be presented below.

Distance Education for All

Based on changing educational trends, the education model Army leaders will experience in 2020 will be one that is predominately distributed and relies significantly on technology to link geographically dispersed learners with distributed educators and resources. The interactions between teachers and students will be more frequent but less structured. As a

result, education will be more accessible to a greater population and more tailored to individual needs. Education institutions will become more integrated, accessible, and more dependent on outside organizations to remain current, relevant, and responsive to student demand. Students will be exposed to a broader set of cultures and ideas and increasingly capable of moving from institution to institution. This will cause education to become increasingly modular and spread over a lifetime of learning.⁶⁸

Over the past 10 to 15 years, on-line and distance education has grown significantly within the civilian educational sector. The growth of the internet and computer technology now permits students the increased ability to interact with their fellow students and professors. As a result, most universities now offer some form a degree program that is done entirely on-line. This includes the nation's most elite university Harvard, which offers nine Master Degree Programs through Distance Education.⁶⁹ The USAWC has embraced this growth and as stated earlier, the Distance Education Program is an integral part of the current construct.

This proposal is that all officers selected to O6 or Colonel are automatically enrolled in the Distance Education Program. Unlike the current program, the course would be completed in one year. Also unlike the current program, officers would be full-time students while enrolled. They would remain where they were stationed and not PCS, unless they knew their next duty assignment and wanted to move. While enrolled they would be assigned to Carlisle Barracks in student status. Prior to the start of the academic year all would come to Carlisle Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, Norfolk or Washington D.C. for a robust 40 hour two-week course that would establish a baseline for all students on key aspects of the curriculum. This period would also include social and sporting events to enable students to network and build relationship with their fellow students. Over the summer, the Army could run three to four of these courses with

overlap to ensure enough seats for the expanded number of students attending the USAWC.

This proposal has many positive aspects. First, stress is reduced on families by not causing additional moves. Second, decreasing the number of moves significantly reduces costs. Third, officers and their families get the same quality family time as the current construct offers. Fourth, only officers selected to colonel will attend, ensuring the right students are getting the appropriate education. Fifth, this course of action according to Colonel (Retired) Clay Chung, the Director of Distance Education, at USAWC, “allows greater outreach, is student centric and allows greater flexibility in the curriculum.”⁷⁰ Under this concept, students could modify their curriculum based on their future assignment and take classes at any various institutions other than DoD schools. Finally, this course of action would require very little organizational or structural changes to support. According to Chung, when asked, he said, “it could definitely work.”⁷¹ The one thing that would need to happen is that the Distance Education Program be approved as a JPME II institution. Currently, it is only considered a JPME I. This is easily corrected. Chung said the course is already taught at JPME II standards.⁷²

This proposal could very easily be adopted within the current construct. The curriculum is already established and the facilities are already in place. The only change would be to shift the current Resident Program faculty over to the Distance Education Program. This would significantly reduce the total number of faculty and make many of the remaining faculty part-time. This would dramatically cut the cost of operating the USAWC. The major argument against this proposal would be the lack of seminar interaction of students both national and international. This is a weakness on face value

but with the three-week resident summer introduction and increased student interaction using computer based conferencing it is invalid.

This proposal addresses many of the issues facing the USAWC. It reduces the cost; increases educational opportunities for colonels, reduces the stress on families with additional moves and; allows the same or increased quality time between officers and their families. Most importantly, it maintains the same academic standards already in place and approved.

Ten-Week Short Course

The final proposal in my opinion is the most simple of three presented and requires no major changes to the current system. As stated throughout this paper the requirement that the entire Senior Service College supports is to produce officers that meet JPME II. While each of the service schools and the two institutions at National Defense University have varied curriculum and goals, their requirement is to meet the Goldwater Nichols Act that imposed JPME II standards. Currently, the Department of Defense offers the ten-week JCWS in Norfolk, Virginia. The course is ten-weeks long and meets all JPME II requirements. This means that the other institutions take ten-months to do what JCWS does in ten-weeks.

The USAWC should convert its curriculum to match that of JCWS. By doing this many things could be accomplished. First, the need to PCS officers and families to Carlisle Barracks would be eliminated. The course only being ten-weeks long would be done in a temporary duty status. Second, the number of Army Colonels receiving JPME II certification would be increased providing more colonels with strategic education to the force. Because the course is only ten-weeks, three courses in one year could be offered. Third, the stress, pressure and cost of moving entire families to Carlisle

Barracks would be eliminated. Finally, the benefit of officer interaction and networking would be retained, that is often argued as one of the most important aspects of the USAWC.

The proposal would not dramatically reduce the overall cost of the USAWC if three courses per year were run. However, the current construct of selecting only the top 20% were kept and only one or two classes per year were run the costs would be slashed.

Fellowship for all Selected to Brigade Command Positions

General Petraeus also has a high level of strategic thinking skills developed and honed by the strategic leaders he has served with as well as his broadening experiences at Princeton. He has described his time there as the most important developmental years of his career because of his exposure to an environment where most people thought differently than he did. It broadened his perspective and helped him better get outside his preferred frame of reference.⁷³

As stated the previously, the hard reality is that while a few hundred officers are educated each year within the overall DoD Senior Service College System, only those officers selected to command at the Brigade level have the opportunity to advance to General officer and the associated senior strategic level positions. Since fellowships are given the highest priority within the slating system, it could be argued that officers with the greatest potential be selected for these opportunities. Under both the proposals presented, Brigade Command selected officers will attend a fellowship. Unlike the current fellowship program that requires officers to move their families, under this proposal they would have an option to move or not. Most of the current military installations within the United States are located near a major university. For example: Fort Campbell/Vanderbilt, Fort Hood/Texas A+M or University of Texas, Fort Lewis/University of Washington, Pentagon/Georgetown, Fort Bragg/Duke. Officers

selected could choose to remain at their current duty station or move to their command location and complete their fellowship. Officers selected for this option would attend the summer sessions like their peers enrolled in the Distance Education Program. This option would be much cheaper, while reducing the stress on families and exposing officers with the most potential the opportunity to gain a much broader and challenging academic experience. The quote below from a FY 2012 fellow shows the strength of the fellowship option.

I was fortunate to attend the Fletcher School en-route to the USMA Social Sciences Department. At that time, I saw the incredible impact Fellows could have on the students and faculty on behalf of the Army/DoD. Returning to this institution has exceeded every expectation. I am a credible military person invited to countless forums, each affording me the opportunity to tell the Army/DoD story and demonstrate military excellence to future policy, government, media, NGO, and economic leaders in our country and throughout the world. This experience connects many to the U.S. military, is personally and professionally rewarding and I believe invaluable to our military institutions.⁷⁴

The one weakness with this option is that selected officers would still have to attend the Ten-week Short Course to achieve JPME II certification. However, this proposal recommends that officers selected for fellowships should get JPME II credit.

Conclusion

I have presented in this paper many perceived weaknesses, inefficiencies, and contradictions within the current USAWC and broader Senior Service College construct. It provided brief historical context, a review of the current system, evidence of an apparent shifting officer culture, and the unbalanced and extreme cost of the USAWC education. It has argued that senior leaders should be educated to meet stated requirements within JPME II and presented three alternative proposals to the current USAWC construct. What it hopefully has not done is undermine in anyway the

importance of senior officer education or the role the USAWC has played in preparing its nations senior officers to defend the strategic interests of the United States.

To paraphrase General Eric Shinseki, if you don't like change, you're going to love irrelevancy. This statement, in 1999 when the Army was beginning transformation, is very relevant today. The Army, as well as the Department of Defense, is facing extreme budget challenges, a shifting officer culture, and a growth in educational technology that will not go away in the foreseeable future. I believe the USAWC must accept these realities and embrace different approaches of educating its senior officers. If not, the USAWC runs the risk of becoming irrelevant and deemed as too costly, time consuming and inefficient.

Endnotes

¹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Leader Development Strategy 2009*, (Combined Arms Center, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, November 15, 2009), 2.

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⁵ Joan Johnson-Freese, "Teach Tough, Think Tough: Why Military Education Must Change," June 15, 2011, <http://defense.aol.com/2011/06/15/teach-tough-think-tough/> (accessed November 18, 2011).

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⁷ Reed, "What's Wrong."

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

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